

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

GIRARD COLLEGE
PHILADELPHIA
STATION C

April 18, 1935

Dr. S. M. Robinson
The Presbyterian
1217 Market Street
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Dr. Robinson:-

Answering your questions specifically, I should greatly regret the attempt just now to make a statement on the social question similar to that attempted by the Northern Baptist Convention. The times do not seem opportune for such a statement.

In addition to the foregoing, I regard such a statement as being unnecessary. Under another enclosure I am sending a pamphlet giving the summary of the official actions of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church as issued by the Assembly of 1931. This embodies a report by a Committee on which I served which was adopted unanimously in 1910. Numerous other declarations have been made from time to time which would seem fairly to put our church on record with a policy to deal with the social question.

With expressions of interest and good wishes, I remain

Yours faithfully,

Cheesman A. Herrick

President

Cheesman A. Herrick
H-KLC

827 No. Kingsley Drive,
Los Angeles, Calif. April 23rd. 1935.

Rev. Stewart M. Robinson, D.D.
The Presbyterian,
1217 Market St.,
Philadelphia.

My Dear Dr. Robinson:

A little more than two years ago, while pastor in the Sacramento Valley, and after some travel in the state, it was borne in upon me with much force that there was great need for a periodical that would represent true Presbyterianism in the Western Zone,--the eleven states west of the eastern line of Colorado. I had also spent four months in Seattle, some time in southern Washington and Oregon. I have held pastorates in Colorado and Arizona.

I began to investigate the possibility of starting "The Western Presbyterian". I found plenty of men in the Bay Region and in Los Angeles who agreed as to the need, but I received slight encouragement to believe there was any capital available for such investment.

Then the Presbyterian Tribune appeared. That made it less likely that a new paper could be financed. And yet here is the great field, the most needy of the whole Church. In the ten Synods, last year, there 1186 churches, about 1000 pastors, 286, 300 members (about 87,000 families) There were 5,744 elders and 15,947 Sunday School officers and teachers. Upon inquiry, I found that in February, 1934, The Presbyterian had 972 subscribers in the entire Western Zone.

We must acknowledge the difficulty of a far eastern journal truly representing the West,--which is different. Also the difficulty of promoting anything "Eastern" out here. But I believe it can be done, a little better than it has yet been done. To this end I have a plan to submit for your consideration.

But, before stating it I want to tell you more specifically why this matter is so deeply on my heart. First; there is the profound spiritual illiteracy of the church members of this great West. If you have not worked out here, you can't imagine it. That is, outside a few favored centers, like Los Angeles, and, believe me, it's bad enough here. Second; the church in the West is, at heart, conservative; but it needs to know why it is so, and to know what Presbyterianism is. There is much looseness and carelessness about church relationships; they call it "tolerance", e.g. I found a daughter of a Presbyterian elder sending her little ones to a Mormon Sunday School, because "they teach them some nice things down there, really". The strong trend of much of the East toward the "left" emphasizes the need of holding the West to the right, for the sake of the whole Church and the Cause of Christ in America. Third; the entrance of the Presbyterian Tribune upon the field, with its strong, modernistic backing, perpetuating the liberal teachings and policies of The Advance, has made me rather sick at heart, and made me very anxious to do some thing to off-set its influence. I am surprised at some of the endorsements it is receiving. Certainly, real Presbyterians need to awake! Fourth; There is but one Presbyterian weekly left in the Northern Church,--The Presbyterian of Phi-

ladelphia. It seems to me, especially since you became the Editor, and have introduced improvements, and taken such a positive, strong and courageous stand for the real Presbyterian and Reformed Faith, that the paper deserves church-wide circulation, above all others, and the strongest possible promotion to that end. For most of the ills of our church, a truly Christian Family newspaper is one of the best antidotes.

Now for the Plan: To establish a "Western Zone Office" in Los Angeles, and to center here two lines of activity; subscription getting and news gathering. To give some definite recognition to the West in the make-up of the paper; i.e. as more material is produced, feature Western news, if not every week, once or twice a month, I feel certain, from what I know of this country, that the Western Office idea would have real appeal, and arouse much interest.

What every periodical needs more than anything else is subscribers,--circulation. I have some very definite ideas for the promotion of the subscription list, which, in due time, I would be glad to submit to your business manager. I also believe that much of the Western church news could be assembled here, edited, and put in more interesting form for publication.

The reason that I am just now in a position to undertake this work is that, about ten months ago, I had to undergo two surgical operations, and I recovered so slowly that I had to give up my work up state, and temporarily accept total disability. I am now able to do much along some lines of activity, but do not believe I should undertake the heavy responsibilities of a pastorate for another year, if ever again. I am quite able to begin on such a program as outlined above. I could work Southern Calif. first, and by Fall, I could begin travelling over the territory as might be necessary.

You do not know me? I have been more than 25 years in the Presbyterian ministry, mostly in the middle West and West. I was the Acting Pastor of Immanuel Presbyterian Church when Dr. Herbert Booth Smith came here in 1917. Following that, I was with the Billy Sunday organization for a year, then on the Faculty of the Moody Bible Institute, 1918-21. From there I was called to be associate minister and director of religious education in East Liberty Church, Pittsburgh, with Stuart Nye Hutchison. Back in the pastorate, I had four years as pastor of the Dovercourt Doad Presbyterian Church of Toronto, etc. Articles of mine have appeared in The Continent, The Herald and Presbyter, The Sunday School Times, and The Presbyterian.

It would not be necessary to rent an office here; either I could secure space in one of the larger Churches, or operate from my home. I have no capital to invest in the enterprise. But, I have a Ford car, and a Multigraph on which I can print all needed supplies, as stationery, circular letters, subscription blanks, etc.

I believe it would be real missionary work to promote The Presbyterian in this great West. I believe the plan I have suggested is worthy a fair trial. I shall be glad to know soon how it appeals to you, and to your Board.

Very sincerely,

Otis G. Dale.

HE OFFICE of The Board of Foreign Missions feels that as a commissioner to the General Assembly of 1935 you have a right to the fullest possible information regarding the work of the Board. Much information will be found in the Annual Report of the Board which you will receive at Cincinnati. The work has undergone persistent attack during the year on grounds that seem to us unwarranted and unjust. Herewith we hand you three brief pamphlets which will express the mind of the Board regarding this attack at most points. Any representative of the Board at the General Assembly will gladly give further information as desired. Let nothing divert us from the major task of making Christ known to all men.

ROBERT E. SPEER

CLELAND B. McAFFEE

April 24, 1935

P. H. K.
K. 99.35

*The Board of Foreign Missions
of the
Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.
and Its "Literature"*

A discussion of
certain criticisms
which have been
passed on the work
of Presbyterian
Foreign Missions.



*The Board of Foreign Missions
of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.,
and its "Literature"*

IN the current questions regarding the missionary work of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., one of the chief issues is that of the publications or "literature" of the Board. The criticisms are always sustained by brief quotations separated from their context which would often modify their meaning. Nor is any explanation given of the actual relation of the Board to the publication involved.

With some of the criticisms the Board is in entire sympathy. It can lay no claim to infallibility. It earnestly desires to make no mistakes and it makes no defense of any errors. The members of the Board and their agents have erred in judgment and in decisions during its ninety-seven years and in its world-wide work. All the Board can claim is that it has sought to avoid errors and has been eager to correct them when it could do so. It welcomes responsible criticisms. Mere fault-finding has no value in such work, and the Board cannot give large heed to attacks which are not meant for correction but only for disturbance. There is place for sincere and definite criticism and it must always be heeded. No wholesale defense of Board policies or actions should be attempted. But the Board does not act hastily and its actions are carefully considered so that it can generally indicate the reasons for its attitudes. If the reasons prove to be not good or the attitudes unwise, there is no hesitation to admit error. There have been times when workers overloaded with duties, have allowed expressions to pass which should have been eliminated. The Board maintains without reserve that none of these could be considered intentional. It can assert for all its working force a sincere desire to say and do that which is fully loyal to the obligations laid upon them as servants of the gospel of Christ.

In this leaflet it is not possible to mention every separate item which is complained of. Many of the instances are obviously used merely to make out a case or to give the appearance of large ground for charges when this ground does not exist. In view of the large number of issues with which the Board is connected in one way and another, the number complained of is surprisingly small. It is to be regretted that *any* grounds of complaint should exist and every effort is made and will be the more carefully made in the future to avoid them.

This document has been prepared by Secretary Cleland B. McAfee and has been considered by his colleagues in the secretarial staff, but the Board as a whole and officially has had no occasion to review it in detail.

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The Board is related to five types of publications:

I

Those which it issues on its own authority and for which it is clearly and finally responsible, such as its Annual Report, its Manual, its official candidate papers, documents which

it has considered in detail and passed upon, as in the case of the Declaration of Evangelical Loyalty (1934), the Reply to Chester Presbytery (1934), and its many pieces of promotional literature for use in envelopes, in pews, and elsewhere, aggregating (1934-35) more than forty items of various kinds.

These are the publications which are directly expressive of the Board's mind and the Board knows of very few questions regarding them. In the early stages of the present attack an effort was made to find fault with the Candidate blanks and with the Manual declaration of the Board regarding its essential purpose, a declaration reported long ago to the General Assembly, approved by it, and known to the Church for years and never before criticized. Let anyone read the statement of this purpose and judge whether it deserves criticism:

"The supreme and controlling aim of Foreign Missions is to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to all men as their Divine Saviour and to persuade them to become His disciples; to gather these disciples into Christian churches which shall be self-propagating, self-supporting and self-governing; to cooperate, so long as necessary, with these churches in the evangelizing of their countrymen, and in bringing to bear on all human life the spirit and principles of Christ."

The leader of the attack on the Board counts the above declaration faulty because it contains no reference to "the things distinctive of Christian missions"! Let it be read again with that criticism in mind. The critic thinks it should refer to "the guilt of sin." But to loyal Presbyterians does not Christ as the divine Saviour include that reference? It is said that reference should be made "to eternal punishment." But again does not the saving work of Christ cover this? There is no reference, he says, to "His virgin birth, His blood shed . . . His bodily resurrection . . . the utter insufficiency of human attempts at following Jesus to present a man faultless before the judgment seat of God . . . to the new birth." But does any sincere man really believe that the paragraph ought to make specific reference to these important doctrines of the Church? Is nothing to be taken for granted among honest Christian believers? Does any clause in the statement of the Board involve the slightest hesitation on any of the great subjects listed by this main critic of the Board? If this is the spirit of the criticism, what can the Board hope to do? Would this critic ever have thought of these objections if he were not seeking to find grounds of complaint?

The secretaries of the Candidate Department have been criticized for including in a letter to candidates in 1932, as a means of deepening their spiritual lives, suggestions, among many methods, of their possible use of several books, among which were Dr. J. H. Oldham's "Devotional Diary," Dr. Harry E. Fosdick's "The Meaning of Prayer," and Dr. Daniel J. Fleming's "Marks of a World Christian." These books have been carefully examined by critics of the Board to find flaws in them. That candidates intelligent enough to be considered by a Board of Foreign Missions should be expected to accept as a whole any book by an earthly author would seem an insult to them. Even so, those who really desire to test the attacks on the Assembly's mission work may be

advised to give these small books the same careful reading that has engaged the critics but without their prejudice and with clear mind on the fact that they were suggested as having certain value for intelligent young people for devotional purposes. Forget any names on title pages in order to let the books themselves have a fair chance to make their own impression. Above all, let sincere readers avoid the unethical habit of making personal inferences as to what the writer "must have meant" in order to make a case against him.

The Candidate blanks are easily secured from the Board, though it would involve much expense to send them widespread since they consist of a large number of documents. It may be enough for real friends of the missionary work to remember, what is well known, that the lay foreign missionaries are the only such church workers under the Presbyterian Church who subscribe to the three familiar vows of the ministry and the eldership:

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
2. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?
3. Do you approve of the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in these United States?"

Every missionary, lay and clerical, before appointment by the Board answers these questions acceptably, and his sincerity is to be as fully accepted as that of honest ministers, ruling elders and deacons at home who are under the same vows. Of course if a critic has lost confidence in his brethren in the ministry and eldership, the missionary force may fall under the same suspicion for that critic. Most Presbyterians will not share the suspicion.

II

The second group of publications are those in which the Board shares responsibility with other Boards of the Church, such as Five Continents, Missionary Mail, the Year Book of Prayer for Missions, The Dial, Women and Missions, and the missionary material used in generous amount by the Board of Christian Education in its various courses. In the clip-sheet sent out by the four Boards, the responsibility of each Board is obviously for its own section alone. In the case of Women and Missions a certain amount of purely editorial responsibility must be permitted for certain parts of the magazine.

There has come to the knowledge of the Board only one criticism of this class of publications, namely, one sentence from an article in Women and Missions, April, 1934, from the pen of a non-Presbyterian writer. This monthly magazine is "published by the Woman's Committees of the Boards of Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A." Its explicitly missionary material is passed upon by the responsible women secretaries of the two Boards. Articles which have purely editorial quality are

naturally committed to the editor who could hardly accept the position if there were not some elements of judgment left to herself. The article complained of is of this nature and has no specific reference to the work of the Board of Foreign Missions, was not endorsed by it nor presented to it as a Board. Yet this Board alone is singled out for attack. One bad feature of much of the criticism is the habit of rending a sentence or a paragraph out of its connection and thus giving it a meaning which its context quite corrects. Careful reading of even this paragraph does not sustain the complaint. Its setting gives it clearer meaning.

One cannot help admiring the energy, but hardly the Christian spirit, that leads a critic to analyze issue after issue of a magazine in order to find at the very end of a four-page article, beautiful in its spirit and intention and deeply Christian in its teaching, one short paragraph which can be wrested from its setting and made to mean something adverse. Taken in its context the sentences are one way of wording what all sincere Christians believe about our Lord—that he did count this his Father's world and that he does mean us to keep it beautiful. Presbyterians are at no point committed to despising the world as God has given it to us. The article is headed, "Easter and the Women of Today," and is written by a frequently bedridden invalid. As the article draws to a close these words appear:

Nothing is more mistaken than to suppose that the vision of our survival makes this earth-life appear less important, a vale of tears rather than an immediate and compelling adventure. Those of us who believe ourselves immortal see every tiniest moment of our present existence enhanced. We would not pass by one smallest flower, we are alert to every chance word or encounter. Rarely do we stop to think about the life hereafter, because the certainty of that deathless future has set a glory over every common thing here. Look, we cry to our souls, here is beauty, here is heroism! Neglect nothing! Miss nothing! There is no present circumstance which may not be contributing to our equipment for our destiny. Pay reverence to each bird, each blossom, respect each sorrow, examine each mistake. Neglect nothing! For we may not pass this way again.

We women who try to accompany a risen Christ have his example for our reverence for earth-life. What does the agony in Gethsemane reveal except that Jesus saw human existence so beautiful that he could not bear to leave it? Why did he come back to earth except that by his risen Presence he might share with us the splendid responsibility of making all things new?

We women of today look back at another woman in an Easter garden long ago. She carried from that garden Easter tidings that remade a reeling world; that woman who, in a whitening dawn, heard a risen Master call to her soul, "Mary!" and hearing, answered, "Master!"

Only a carping critic would suggest that the writer thinks that Gethsemane means no more than is stated above or that Christ's resurrection involved no

more. Obviously the writer meant that these inferences, as well as many others, are surely to be drawn from those great events. The whole article rests on assurance of their reality with all their vast and surpassing meaning. To suppose that she intends to narrow them to this single meaning is to do violence to the entire article. Many would express the idea differently, but it is no strange thought to a Christian believer, and it is wholly compatible with the greater meaning of the events named.

III

The third group includes those publications in which the Board shares, together with other Boards of the Presbyterian Church, with other Churches and Boards of Missions. This would include the Mission Study books for which the Board has necessarily limited responsibility because of the many factors which enter into their composition and use. There might occur also publications of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America of which the Board is a member, but in which it has only a limited responsibility.

Most of the criticism passed upon the publications or "literature" of the Board is connected with this type of material. It opens the large question of co-operative work—whether it would be better for the Board to change its policy and issue purely Presbyterian books for mission study, accepting all responsibility for their contents, or to continue its working relation with other mission agencies, as approved by the General Assembly, thus ensuring a wider use of the books issued but running the risk of differing from part of their contents. With any advantage or security there might be in this course, there would be the danger of greatly increased financial cost, the necessity that each denomination shall produce a parallel series of books at increased cost, and the impression that missionary work consists of what each denomination does, whereas the work is the task of all the Christian forces. Any general book will need supplemental material explaining the work of the denomination. Such material is supplied for the Presbyterian Church whenever needed.

In the case of Mission Study books there has been a peculiarly unfair use of material by the critics, taking a clause or a sentence as though it stood alone whereas its context would greatly affect the total meaning. During the lifetime of the Missionary Education Movement, organized in 1902 as the Young People's Missionary Movement, which issues these cooperative books, there have appeared seventy-two different volumes. So far as the Board has heard, criticism has been offered regarding less than half a dozen of these on the ground of their theological or Biblical aspects. The Board has long urged that the books should be more largely **missionary** in the narrower sense, rather than social or ethnological. It has sought to bring about this result and it believes that any careful observation of the books of recent years will sustain its belief that this result has been obtained.

It would not be fair to suggest, however, that the Board has been satisfied with the Mission Study books of the past. On the contrary, it has not hesitated to express its dissatisfaction both to the Missionary Education Movement and to the General

Assembly. For this reason its representatives, with those of the Board of National Missions, laid before the Missionary Education Movement some months ago the following careful Statement which has been accepted by that Movement as the basis on which future writers shall be asked to proceed and by which the Boards expect to judge any manuscripts. The Board has pledged itself to increased care in the entire matter and in so far as earlier failures are due to any haste on its own part, it deeply regrets them and does not exonerate itself from blame. Provision is made for longer periods of examination for manuscripts hereafter. This Statement does not describe any new positions but merely crystallizes the efforts long made to bring about the changes needed for accurate mission study.

Statement Regarding Mission Study Books

In formulating the objective of Missionary Education in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., the Presbyterian representatives in the Missionary Education Movement are obliged to state first of all the primary purpose of the missionary enterprise of their denomination as defined in the Charters of their Boards. This purpose is stated as follows:

1. In the words of the Charter of the Board of National Missions:

"The Charter of the Board of National Missions provides that its 'objects and purposes . . . shall be the extension of Christianity and the Gospel of Christ in all its fulness and His service in all its implications in the United States and elsewhere . . . by establishing and strengthening local churches, evangelism, organization and such special enterprises as may be deemed wise.'

2. In the words of the Charter of the Board of Foreign Missions:

"As stated in the Manual of the Board: 'The supreme and controlling aim of Foreign Missions is to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to all men as their Divine Saviour and to persuade them to become His disciples; to gather these disciples into Christian churches which shall be self-propagating, self-supporting and self-governing; to co-operate, so long as necessary, with these churches in the evangelizing of their countrymen, and in bringing to bear on all human life the spirit and principles of Christ.'

With these definite statements in mind, and keenly aware of the need of our own Church for Missionary Education we have set down the following ten objectives of Missionary Education as we see it:

Objectives

1. To keep clearly before the Church our abiding faith in the work of the Spirit of God in our modern world, changing individual lives into the likeness of Jesus Christ our Lord through the power of his redeeming love, and moving toward the creation of that new society wherein God's will is to be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

2. To inform the Church as to the need of the missionary enterprise in the light of present-day life and problems.
3. To keep alive an appreciation of the historical foundations on which our present-day missionary enterprise rests.
4. To create on the part of all Christian people a desire for an increasing understanding of the cause of Missions.
5. To deepen in the Church the conviction of the adequacy of the Christian gospels and the uniqueness of our Lord Jesus Christ to meet the spiritual need of every race and people.
6. To develop in the Church the sense of a growing world-wide Christian fellowship in which together and unitedly we seek the Kingdom of God.
7. To lead Christians to meet the inescapable social, economic, racial, national and international implications of the Christian message in a modern world.
8. To create and maintain Christian attitudes and relationships among all the peoples of the world in order to eliminate racial prejudices, war, and other kindred evils.
9. To bring to the Church the spiritual and practical results of the missionary enterprise.
10. To stimulate an interest in the ongoing cause of Missions which will result in the consecration of prayer, gifts and life to the coming of the Kingdom of God.

The main book of 1934-35 was written by one of our missionaries, Rev. Willis Lamott, "Suzuki Looks at Japan." The book has been well received and has not been criticized except in an extended criticism of all the foreign mission books of the year, the wholesale nature of which criticism makes evident the desire to find fault everywhere. An article by Rev. Charles J. Woodbridge in the February, 1935, issue of "Christianity Today" picks the books to pieces generally with a large sprinkling of quotations, all of them brief and rent from their context. It opens with a charge which can be flatly denied—that Dr. T. H. P. Sailer, the honorary educational secretary of the Board, "rejects the exclusive claims of Christianity." This is not true and the supposed evidence for it proves nothing of the kind. Complaint is made that a chapter in one book is written by a Buddhist who makes suggestions regarding missionary work. This chapter is given in a book of collateral reading with no shadow of authority and it involves no possible idea "that Presbyterians must look to a Buddhist for suggestions as to their message." The chapter deals with methods rather than with message. The editor of the entire book is an honored pastor of the Reformed Church of North America, Dr. Milton Stauffer. No one has any right to suggest that he goes blindly about such business. Dr. Kagawa comes in for severe criticism, but no reply to this criticism could be so effective as the sincere and kindly reading of his book. It should be borne in mind that Dr. Kagawa is entirely independent of any Board in his great work in Japan. The book here criticized was not published for study but was offered for collateral reading.

Quotations from Mr. Lamott's book number roughly a dozen in this blanket criticism. Most of

them are in themselves quite innocuous, their offense lying in the insistence they contain on the transforming power of the Christian faith in social life. They are carefully selected to give the impression that this is Mr. Lamott's main emphasis, but any candid reader will find it is not. For example, Mr. Woodbridge goes so far as to say, after a short list of quotations: "From such excerpts one might almost be driven to the conclusion that as long as a man is religious, he need not be Christian." This would be a monstrous inference; indeed, the whole book is an argument to the contrary. The critic admits isolated expressions "which, standing alone, seem innocent or even orthodox." He does not trouble to quote any of these! The best reply to this criticism would be a fair reading of the books, to see what they do say, instead of looking carefully for something that can be wrenched into error. Let those who are troubled about such books read them and not depend on guides who seemingly want them to believe the worst they can believe about their fellow-Christians.

The main book for 1935-36 has been written by Dr. John A. Mackay, a secretary of the Board. It will, of course, be studied under a microscope by the enemies of the Board when it appears, but readers who know Dr. Mackay will wish to form their own judgments.

Probably the most serious criticism has been directed at "The Never Failing Light," a mission study book of 1933-34 by Rev. Dr. James H. Franklin. But these criticisms need to be carefully examined. A word may be said regarding the author, an eminent Baptist minister in service since 1896. Until 1912 Dr. Franklin was a pastor in the Rocky Mountain region, and in that year became secretary of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, from which position he was called in 1934 to the presidency of the Crozer Theological Seminary. No one who knows Dr. Franklin even slightly will question either his spiritual life or his deep and intelligent concern for the cause of Christ in the mission field. It is always fair in reading a book to give the author credit for what one knows him to be and to interpret whatever he says as favorably as one's knowledge of himself will justify. Every friend of Dr. Franklin will take up his book with a presumption that some fine and true thing is to be said. He is that kind of a man. A careless or prejudiced reader can approach any writing with an adverse presumption, as has been done in this case by the critics of the Board, eager to find something to criticize.

It is not possible here to discuss all the adverse words that are quoted by these critics, though it is fair to raise the question whether any one party to a cooperative movement ought to be charged with the faults of one of its products. The sharpest criticism of Dr. Franklin's book is the use in it of a quotation from Richard Wightman, generally used as a saying of Dr. Franklin, with the inaccuracy that marks many of the criticisms: "What was the cross to Him? Naught but an incident in the life which He had already laid down for His kind." A later critic says blandly of this that Dr. Franklin says that the cross was a mere incident to Jesus, whereas Jesus counted it the very purpose of his life! Any serious reading of this paragraph as a whole will show how it uses this quotation. Dr. Franklin is arguing about the levelling of racial barriers and that "it was dangerous

doctrine Jesus preached as He sought to redeem the world: God loves all races and all men of every race, and loves them equally well." He goes on to say that it is still dangerous doctrine if we preach it and try to live it. "Even today it means a cross to proclaim such truths as Jesus uttered, and probably a crucifixion to practice them. But it would be a crucifixion that would help Christ to redeem the world from the sins of racial hatred and their frightful consequences." (This sounds much like the apostle's saying in Col. 1:24.) Then follows the quotation already given. It is obvious that Dr. Franklin is recognizing a perfectly familiar fact—that our Lord did not first give himself to the will of God for the saving of men on Calvary, where the consecration was consummated. He did that from the very first. His life was given all the way through. The cross was exactly what might have been expected from such an one as he had shown himself to be. He would lay down his life there as a natural expression of the dedication he had made in the very act of incarnation. See his own expression in John 10:17, 18. Taken by itself, as the critics like to take it, without context and without understanding, anybody can criticize the quotation, but taken in its true place and meaning, it is not so open to criticism.

The other criticisms of this book are of much the same order. No one, Dr. Franklin least of all, would count the book perfect, but all who know him would be sure that he would never intend to say a disloyal word of Christ or of his gospel. Like many other men, he wrote without thought of meticulous critics who would seek offense in his writing.

IV

A fourth group are those publications written by members of the Board or its staff or missionaries under its appointment, with preparation of which it has little or nothing to do and which it may or may not approve. This would include Dr. Speer's extensive review of "Re-Thinking Missions," published in the Missionary Review of the World, January, 1933, and at once used by the Board in large quantities as an expression of its own views. Also the booklet, "The Major Christian Enterprise," written by Secretary McAfee (1933) and bearing the Board's imprint. Obviously, the Board cannot be responsible for all that its members or appointees in various lines may write.

A few criticisms have come to the knowledge of the Board regarding this type of publication. Some friends of the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry took exception to some sections of Dr. Speer's review of the Report, but the Board accepted it as expressing its mind and gave it wide circulation. Exception has been taken also to some expressions in an article by one of its vice-presidents regarding the same Report, but when the full statement is taken into account and the personality of the writer, the Board believes a kindly judgment will be reached by most readers.

Here should be mentioned articles by missionaries which may appear in various magazines or other publications. To some of these the Board takes immediate exception and seeks at once to discover

whether the offending article expresses the real mind of the writer, and when this is assured it seeks to bring the writer back to what the Church has counted sound positions or else to make it clear that his relation to the Mission should terminate. This occurred in the case of Mrs. Pearl S. Buck upon her return from China in 1931. Certain expressions in published articles seemed far aside from the belief which she had finely declared when she went to the field under appointment of the Southern Presbyterian Church. The Board immediately began inquiry regarding these and hoped to discover ways of clearing them in favor of that earlier faith when public attack was made on the Board on her account and she very properly felt that it was not wise for these attacks to continue. The Board was not ready to surrender its hope for renewed evangelical declaration and when Mrs. Buck presented her resignation it accepted it with the natural regret which any Christian agency would feel under such conditions. What it hoped for could not be secured. Any Board which would accept such a situation without regret would be unworthy of the name of Christ.

In other cases, the Board has good reason to know that the mind of the writer cannot be fully expressed in the offending paragraph and needs only to call attention to it to safeguard against further danger. It would be improper for any missionary of the Board to be restricted in tongue or pen beyond the plain loyalties that inhere in his position. Missionaries are self-respecting and cannot be treated like children. They have their own minds and they must be expected to express themselves in their own way. The Board is not willing to subject them to any tests or limitations which are not laid equally upon their peers in the Home Church. They may properly claim the right to fair and friendly interpretation and to resent meticulous efforts to trap them in phrases and terms. The Board does not agree with all that missionaries write and they do not expect it to do so. It does not pretend that they are all alike nor that they all believe exactly alike. That would put them out of the Presbyterian Church, whose ministers and members are under no such restriction. The Board does, however, maintain that the missionaries in its service are within the evangelical circle of the Presbyterian Church and it challenges any one who says the contrary to make his charge good in any particular instance, not by a paragraph rent from its context for adverse interpretation when it is capable also of friendly and understanding interpretation suited to the history and character of the writer.

In a Presbyterian paper of October, 1934, an editorial quoted a letter from an unnamed missionary making serious charges against his fellow-missionaries in an unnamed Mission. No effort had been made to learn the facts through the offices of the Board nor to give the Board the opportunity to make the correction which every sincere man knows it would eagerly do if the facts were as the letter indicated. The Board at once asked the editor to come to its meeting for a fuller and intelligible statement. The matter was immediately taken up with the writer. When each specific charge in the letter was followed up and tested, the writer withdrew every one of them. In the unpublished portions of the same letter were such obvious errors of inference and fact that the whole letter was discredited by any who heard it. If the writer knew no more of his fellow-missionaries

than of other facts clearly within the knowledge of the Board, his charges would have been discounted by any group before whom they could have been brought. This has been the experience of the Board time and again. Vague, general charges have been carelessly scattered about and when effort was made to secure definite information on which action could occur, the charges have evaporated as in this phenomenal instance. Surely it is not too much to insist that charges brought against such a group of workers as the Presbyterian missionaries shall be sustained by those who bring them, on penalty of slander of their Christian brethren.

V

A final group are those publications which merely pass through the hands of the Board or its offices intended for certain uses but not endorsed by it for all their contents, such as leaflets or pamphlets listed for reading or offered for some special quality they may possess. The Board neither prepares nor issues these publications; it receives them from others and suggests them for the one purpose designated at the time. Here might be included textbooks or other materials used in the institutions on the field with which it cooperates in varying degrees, though these do not pass through the hands of the Board in any sense.

Some criticisms have reached the Board and have been circulated throughout the Church regarding several fugitive pamphlets which were secured from other publishers for some especial purpose. These have never been part of the program of the Board itself, though it does not wish to evade responsibility for decisions made by any section of its working force. In the course of the movement of the women of the Church at large for a deepening of the spiritual life of the whole body, a series of booklets was offered to readers, not with any endorsement of all their contents but for single values which each contained. Those who secured these pamphlets made no pretense of theological wisdom which would pass judgment on paragraphs isolated from the general line of the reading. In the most notable case the pamphlet was immediately withdrawn from circulation and from the catalogue with the expressed regret of the responsible persons that earlier reading had not disclosed the possible implications of this paragraph, but with the continued feeling that apart from it the pamphlet contained rich material for a deeper spiritual life. It was offered to mature women who are not children in the faith. It is doubtful whether the offending paragraph would have provoked opposition if there had not been in the air a spirit of suspicion and animosity which sought every available point of attack upon the Board of Foreign Missions. The paragraph would ordinarily have been passed over as merely incidental to the clear purpose of the pamphlet.

In this same category may be included the criticisms upon text or reading books used in universities or agencies with which the Board cooperates on the mission field. Fault has been found with certain textbooks reported in the Nanking University in China. Two things need to be remembered in connection with such criticisms: First, that any university uses scores or hundreds of textbooks in its various courses, and that it would be an impossible task for any Board or Mission to supervise all these textbooks or to

claim the right to control the whole series in a co-operative institution. However, the Board would feel responsible for objecting to the introduction of textbooks which are obviously in conflict with the evangelical beliefs of our Church. It would do so in the instances mentioned if the occasion remained. Two books have been complained of: Dr. Barton's "Jesus of Nazareth" and Dr. Fosdick's "The Modern Use of the Bible." Inquiry was made at once regarding these books and reply comes from Rev. W. Reginald Wheeler, well known and loved in America and a representative of the Presbyterian Mission in Nanking University, that Dr. Barton's book was used in the fall of 1931 with six students, Dr. Fosdick's book was used solely as a reference book in the spring of 1932 and the fall of 1933, that neither of them is now used in any way, that the teachers who used them were not Presbyterians and that these teachers are no longer connected with the University. There seems no correction open to the Board and it accepts this word with all faith, making known its strong desire that all such courses shall be safeguarded in the future.

Let it be said, secondly, that no textbook would be put into the hands of a class for unqualified acceptance. A teacher goes along with a textbook. No one can survey the field of university work in our own land or elsewhere without knowing the difficulty of finding textbooks with which a thoughtful teacher would wholly agree. The writer has been a college and graduate teacher for more than thirty years, and of course has used many textbooks, but he cannot now recall one which he has put into the hands of a class without reservations which it was his business to indicate as the study went on. He would have been humiliated to have a class ready to accept any textbook in its entirety. Many a book has rich values alongside of its defects. Protecting a class against all errors in textbooks is poor psychology and worse religion. This does not justify careless selection of textbooks, but it should protect teachers from over-criticism when errors are found in books which they use in a given course.

Here also should be included publications on the field by agencies with which the Missions are cooperating, such as Christian Literature Societies in China, India and elsewhere. Criticism has been made of some publications to which the Board had earlier objected. The position of the Board has been clear at all times. Neither the Board itself nor any of its missionaries has endorsed erroneous publications. Both Board and missionaries deeply regret that any such publications have ever appeared. In the case of the Christian Literature Society of China, regarding which several charges have been made, it must be remembered that this Society is the main hope of the Missions in China for the printing and distributing of Christian literature for the growing Church. It publishes more than 1200 titles, among them the very best works of Christian history. The criticisms are directed against less than half a dozen of these publications. The Board is not at all indifferent to these, few as they are, and it desires their correction as it has sought to safeguard against their repetition. It does earnestly desire, however, that thought be given to the absolute necessity for some agency which will provide Christian literature for the growing churches in all mission lands. For any one Church to provide this literature would be an impossible burden both in personnel and in money. To suggest that the Board shall cease to cooperate with an agency because now and again it errs

and needs correction is to ask an impossible and unChristian action. The errors are not to be condoned and they are to be corrected and safeguarded with utmost care, but it would be suicidal to the Christian cause for the Missions to insist on separate agencies because of these occasional errors. No intelligent person accuses the Christian Literature Society of China nor that of India of intentional misleading of believers. There are on the field as here at home different points of view on some things which are dear to the Church. The Board and the Missions of the Church have no thought of evading responsibility for correcting errors and they share to the fullest the regret of the critics that these have occurred. There seems no way to avoid such risks if there is to be any serious effort to provide Christian reading for the new believers. It would be impossible for each group to seek to issue its own special line of reading matter. The divisive groups in America who do so, issuing books and leaflets that emphasize their peculiar tenets, have little standing among the evangelical believers whom they claim to surpass. To carry this same spirit into the foreign mission field would seem pitiable, all the more because all the resources of all the Missions put together are far too small to accomplish so great a task as is presented.

Even here it should be said that unfairness has appeared in the excerpting of paragraphs and sentences from contexts and in inferences of meaning which do not appear in careful reading of the material. Articles are clearly sought for which will bear a bad interpretation and the most is made of them once something is found. The whole evangelical standing and reputation of a writer is cast to the winds in the joy of finding a sentence or a paragraph which might appear to condemn him.

Neither the Board nor any of its intelligent friends will have any illusions regarding the effect of even this extended reply to the critics of the Board's Foreign Mission publications so far as the critics themselves are concerned. Their minds are clearly made up. Nothing but the destruction of the Board and the substitution for it of something which meets their personal approval will be satisfactory. It is entirely within the authority of the General Assembly to accomplish this purpose if it should be counted wise. The members of the Assembly's Board, unlike those of the Independent Board, are not self-appointed or self-supervised; unlike that Board it does not make nor control its own standards; it has not adopted its own policies; it does not say the final word about itself. Money sent to it is directed toward its purposes under guidance of the General Assembly which established it and controls it. In short, it is a Presbyterian Board. This is not satisfactory to the critics who now attack it. They wish it rather to act independently of the General Assembly, adopting standards which the General Assembly never uses, taking doctrinal positions which no court in the Church takes. Regarding these critics who are spreading their attacks throughout the Church, the Board cherishes no hope of satisfying their desires; nothing short of Assembly action can accomplish this. And the Board has no control over the General Assembly and desires none.

However, the Board is in a certain sense the custodian of the interests of the large body of missionaries

now in service for Christ and the Presbyterian Church in sixteen countries of the world. In a similar sense it is custodian of the gifts and ministries of the rank and file of loyal Presbyterians in the entire Church. Its concern is not for the critics but for this large body of missionaries and for this rank and file of earnest, devoted Christian believers who send their gifts through its treasury,—women, ruling elders, members,—who are being disturbed by irresponsible publications spread widely throughout the Church. It is vastly easier to make an attack than to answer it. The answer has often to cover pages where the attack covers lines. It is easier for almost any one to believe an adverse report than to study patiently the reply to it.

Finally, let it be understood that no effort has been made here to reply to all of the attacks based on publications to which the Board is related. It is thought that the ones here discussed briefly are fairly typical. Any troubled person is urged to be perfectly free to raise with the Board any question in his mind, asking about any quotation that may have come to his knowledge or any item in any publication of the sort mentioned. Letters have always received full replies and the Board will gladly continue its welcome of any inquiries or criticisms that may be passed to it. These may be addressed to any secretary or other officer of the Board at any of its offices. Is it too much to suggest that what may appear to be defects in the literature of the Board discovered by any reader may properly be reported to the Board before they are published otherwise? Should the Board fail to take necessary steps for correction or should its explanations prove unworthy, the next step would be to report the matter to the General Assembly which has always a Standing Committee on Foreign Missions to receive such matters for full consideration. This orderly procedure will make for efficiency and is the natural course for loyal Presbyterians.

The work is too vast to be hindered by any criticism that can be cleared. The souls of millions of men and women are involved. There is only one gospel for them all, the gospel of the incarnate Son of God, who lived and died, rose again and now lives for their and our redemption and sanctification. If any barriers can be cleared from the path of the missionary force on the field or that of the supporters here at home, let us clear them if it is within our power to do so. To that end may the Holy Spirit guide us by his wisdom.

THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U. S. A.
156 Fifth Avenue, New York

1935

LOCAL COMMITTEE ON ARRANGEMENTS

ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U. S. A.

Cincinnati, Ohio, May 23-29, 1935

HEADQUARTERS

Twelfth Floor . Chamber of Commerce . Cincinnati, Ohio

April 25, 1935

My dear Doctor:

We are beginning to make a list of men who will be available for Cincinnati Pulpits during General Assembly on Sunday. Our file indicates that you will be in the Assembly.

May we count on you to occupy one of the pulpits on May 26? We shall appreciate an early reply.

Cordially yours,

E. W. Ziegler.
Chairman

Pulpit Supplies Committee

The Presbytery of Cincinnati recognizes the responsibility of the Church for the preaching of the social message embedded in the Gospel of Christ, and the inescapable duty of the Church to meet current social issues. However, we are of the opinion that just now, people desperately need the inner spiritual resources with which to face such issues. Therefore, the Presbytery of Cincinnati, meeting in the Wilson Memorial Presbyterian Church, April 22, 1935, heartily approves the recommendation of Elder R. C. Tillinghast of the Presbytery of New York that the sermons preached in our churches on Assembly Sunday, May 26, be evangelistic in character. The Presbytery recommends that the Committee on Arrangements thru its sub-committee on Pulpit Supply request guest ministers to deal with the theme of the individual's personal relationship to God thru Jesus Christ our Lord.

Calvary Presbyterian Church

JOHN H. BAXTER, PASTOR
17TH AND PARK PLACE

Wichita, Kansas

April 26, 1935.

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Dear Dr. Robison;

Have just read the last number of the Presbyterian with the good news that you and your father both go to the Assembly. Wichita Presbytery is sending a young man, Rev. Frank Worthington, to Assembly with his Father-in-law as an elder, who is also his father in grace, truly a gran man modest and strong. Mr. Schmidtt. You might have a father & son banquet with him, and also have his wife to chaperon you. I'm afraid you will need it.

Fraternally yours,

John N. Baxter,

P.S. - You might persuade Frank to take the Presby^l lns
I feel a solemn prideⁱⁿ the paper. it is a credit to
our church. Heaven reward you stand,